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General Assembly
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Agenda item 5
Illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory

Security Council
Sixty-seventh year

Identical letters dated 6 September 2012 from the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

In follow-up of our previous letters regarding Israel's ongoing military campaign in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, I regret to inform you that many more Palestinian civilians continue to fall victim to deadly and destructive attacks by Israel, the occupying Power, particularly in the besieged Gaza Strip.

The Israeli occupying forces have continued to carry out missile air strikes and artillery bombardment of civilian areas in the Gaza Strip, in grave violation of international law, including the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, deliberately targeting and killing Palestinian civilians. This morning, 6 September, the Israeli occupying forces killed six Palestinians in targeted strikes. Zakaria Al-Jammal, age 23, Khaled Al-Qorm, age 23, and Khalil Al-Jarba, age 27, were killed by Israeli drone missile fire attacks on Al-Bureij refugee camp in the central Gaza Strip. Ehab Al-Zaaneen, age 23, Akram Al-Zaaneen, age 22, and Talal Al-Kafarneh, age 26, were killed by Israeli artillery fire against an area in Beit Hanoun in the northern Gaza Strip. Israeli airstrikes continued throughout the day in the Gaza Strip, injuring several more people and causing destruction to civilian properties.

I must also draw your urgent attention once again to the destruction being caused by Israel's ongoing illegal settlement campaign in the Occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem. The illegal construction of Israeli settlements and so-called "outposts" continues unabated. In this regard, today, 6 September, plans were approved for the construction of an additional 940 units in the illegal settlement of "Gilo" in the southern part of Occupied East Jerusalem. Such provocative, illegal Israeli actions continue to raise tensions and mistrust and to gravely jeopardize the two-State solution on the basis of the pre-1967 borders, a solution that is totally incompatible with Israel's unlawful colonization policies and practices.

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Acts of aggression and provocation by extremist Israeli settlers against Palestinian civilians and properties, including homes, agricultural orchards, mosques, churches and cemeteries, also continue unabated. Violence, harassment, intimidation and outright terror continue to be perpetrated by Israeli settlers throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, on a near-daily basis. Today, settlers from the "Yitzhar" settlement destroyed dozens of olive trees in the south Nablus village of Burin, and Israeli settlers from the settlement of "Mevo'ot" near Jericho set fire to farm produce belonging to a Palestinian farmer. These vile aggressions come on the heels of the destructive and hateful act of vandalism and desecration committed on 4 September by Israeli extremists against the Latrun Abbey near Jerusalem. The extremists torched the door of the Abbey, and anti-Christian graffiti, such as "Jesus is a monkey", and the word "Migron" were scrawled on the walls of this place of peace and worship.

Israeli settlers have also continued to physically attack and cause harm to Palestinian civilians in the recent period. This includes, just to name a few of the many such rabid incidents, the stoning of a bus near Ramallah by a group of Israeli settlers, which resulted in the wounding of five Palestinians; the hurling of stones by dozens of Israeli settlers at Palestinian homes in the Shu'fat neighbourhood of Occupied East Jerusalem, in which one Palestinian suffered a head injury; the stoning of Palestinian vehicles at the Hawara checkpoint in an area south of the city of Nablus; and an assault by settlers on a group of Palestinian workers paving roads in Nablus.

The impunity of these extremist settlers is no doubt bolstered by the Israeli Government's failure and clear unwillingness to hold them accountable for the constant terror that they are wreaking upon innocent Palestinian civilians. We reiterate that Israel, the occupying Power, is responsible for all of the crimes committed by the settlers whom it has transferred to the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, in grave breach of international humanitarian law. The international community must also act to uphold its legal responsibilities in this regard and take measures to hold Israel, the occupying Power, accountable, with the aim of compelling it to act forthwith to avert the continuation of such criminal, provocative attacks, which are aggravating tensions and religious sensitivities between the two sides and risk further destabilizing the situation on the ground.

In closing, I regret to inform you that the situation of Palestinian political prisoners illegally imprisoned and detained by Israel, the occupying Power, continues to be grave. With its ongoing arrest campaign throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Israel continues to add to the ranks of those Palestinians being illegally held captive. At the same time, the already deplorable conditions in which they are being held continue to deteriorate owing to Israel's blatant disregard and breach of international humanitarian and human rights law. In protest of such illegal Israeli practices, including that of administrative detention, by which nearly 300 Palestinians are being held without charge, some Palestinian detainees have now been on hunger strike for over two months' time, and their health conditions have become of grave concern. Among those on prolonged hunger strike are Samer Al-Barq (108 days), Hussein Al-Safadi (78 days), Ayman Al-Sharawneh (68 days) and Samer Al-Essawy (37 days).

We reiterate that Israel, the occupying Power, is fully responsible for the well-being, safety and lives of the thousands of Palestinians in its captivity. We reiterate

our condemnation of Israel's illegal practice of arbitrarily detaining Palestinian civilians, without charge, without revelation of evidence against them and without trial. We again call on the international community, including the Security Council, the General Assembly and other relevant United Nations bodies, to act urgently to compel Israel to cease its illegal practice of administrative detention, to cease all of its human rights violations against Palestinians held in its prisons and detention centres, and to act forthwith to release all of the Palestinians, including children and women, whom it is unlawfully incarcerating.

All of the above pressing issues constitute further confirmation of the dire situation that prevails in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, requiring the international community's urgent attention. Israel, the occupying Power, must be held accountable for all of its illegal and provocative actions. Serious measures must be undertaken to end the culture of impunity that Israel has for too long enjoyed as the international community has failed to impose consequences on the occupying Power despite its gross violations of the law, including the perpetration of war crimes. The international community, particularly the Security Council, cannot continue to stand idly by while the law is breached and international peace and security are threatened. Serious, timely efforts are needed to uphold the legal obligation to protect the Palestinian people under occupation, including the prisoners and detainees; to ensure respect for the law, including the Fourth Geneva Convention; and to salvage the chances of achieving peace and security.

This letter is in follow-up to our previous 433 letters regarding the ongoing crisis in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, since 28 September 2000. These letters, dated from 29 September 2000 (A/55/432-S/2000/921) to 21 August 2012 (A/ES-10/561-S/2012/659), constitute a basic record of the crimes being committed by Israel, the occupying Power, against the Palestinian people since September 2000. For all of these war crimes, acts of State terrorism and systematic human rights violations committed against the Palestinian people, Israel, the occupying Power, must be held accountable and the perpetrators must be brought to justice.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of the present letter distributed as a document of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 5, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Riyad **Mansour**
Ambassador
Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations